

National Leaders Join DeRocco Fellows Advisory Board to Advance Women's Leadership in Manufacturing

New advisory board brings together experts from industry, education, and workforce development to guide the DeRocco Fellows' national growth and impact.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A distinguished group of national leaders in manufacturing, workforce development, and higher education has come together to serve on the [DeRocco Fellows](#) Advisory Board, bringing deep expertise and a shared commitment to advancing women into leadership roles across the industry.

“

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Lauren DeRocco Gopi

The DeRocco Fellows program, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to developing the next generation of women

leaders in advanced manufacturing, has convened its inaugural Advisory Board to help guide its long-term vision and expand its impact. The board reflects a cross-section of industry, academia, and national workforce leadership, reinforcing both the urgency of the mission and the strength behind it.

Through mentorship, leadership development, and industry connections, the program expands pathways for women in advanced manufacturing leadership and builds a stronger, more inclusive talent pipeline. Advisory Board members will provide strategic guidance, expand access to networks and resources, and serve as ambassadors for the program's growth.

“My mom spent her career working to ensure the manufacturing sector had the talent and leadership it needed to thrive,” said Lauren DeRocco Gopi, daughter of the program's namesake, Emily DeRocco. “This remarkable group of leaders reflects both her legacy and the future she worked to build.”

The Advisory Board will convene quarterly to support program strategy, expansion, and stakeholder engagement

Advisory Board Members

- Nate Ames, Executive Director, Center for Design and Manufacturing Excellence, The Ohio State

University

- Fazleena Badurdeen, Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, University of Kentucky
- Michael Britt-Crane, Education and Workforce Development Strategist, National Institute of Standards and Technology
- Julia Flynn, Boston University, 2025 Fellow
- Maria Flynn, President and CEO, Jobs for the Future
- Edward Herderick, Education and Workforce Development Director, America Makes
- Rebecca Lewis, Director of Workforce Development, NextFlex
- Kimberly Perkins, Vice President of Manufacturing and Market Development, Amatrol
- Robert Shaner, PhD, Chief Workforce Development Officer, LIFT
- Sue Smith, Executive Program Director, Smart Automation Certification Alliance
- Cora White, Purdue University, 2025 Fellow
- Jim Woodell, PhD, Founder, Principal and CEO, Venn Collaborative

About the DeRocco Fellows Program

The DeRocco Fellows program is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting women pursuing careers in advanced manufacturing. Through mentorship, community, and leadership development, the program provides career-launching experiences that strengthen the industry's future workforce. To learn more or support the program, visit www.deroccofellows.org.

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